

Iowa Fire Service & Emergency Response Council

Meeting Minutes March 11, 2025 Fire Service Training Bureau

Council Members Present:

Jim Clark - *IA Professional Fire Chiefs*
Ellen Hagen – *IA Firefighters Association (via Zoom)*
Pam Kenkel – *Public Member*
Lonni Koch – *IA Firefighters Association (via Zoom)*
Jamie Lee - *IA Fire Chiefs Association*
Adam Lathrop – *Ex-Officio/Iowa Division of Labor (via Zoom)*

State Fire Marshal and FSTB Staff:

Dan Wood – *State Fire Marshal*
Jess Dunn – *FSTB Bureau Chief*

Absent (Excused):

Jeff Kling – *Public Member*
Cody Nicely-Green – *IA Professional Firefighters*

Guests:

None

Call to Order:

Bureau Chief Dunn called the meeting to order at 10:06 AM on 3/11/2025. Roll call taken (see above).

Approval of Agenda:

Motion

Jim Clark made a motion to approve the March 11, 2025 agenda, seconded by Jamie Lee. Approved 5-0.

Approval of Minutes:

Jess Dunn emailed the draft 12/17/2024 minutes to the council members for review. No corrections were received. An email vote was conducted and the minutes of the 12/17/2024 meeting were approved on 2/18/2025 with a vote of 7-0. No further discussion.

State Fire Marshal Update (SFM Dan Wood):

The Arson and explosives bureau continues to be busy with multiple cases and events. There have been around 41 cases so far this year. This is slightly above average for the time of the year. There are typically around 300 cases per year. The winter is generally a busy time of the year for the arson and explosives bureau. Dan expects it to even out as the year progresses.

SFM agents responded to the incident in Storm Lake. The bomb robot was delivering gas canisters to the house where the subject was barricaded inside. During this incident, the bomb robot sustained a substantial amount of damage. It was shot in the arm in three different places, the radio, the brain, one of tracks, and in two of the cameras. It was taken to Tennessee after the incident for repairs. Repairs are expected to cost a couple hundred thousand dollars.

The bureau is also purchasing a new bomb dog from Iron Heart in Kansas City for Special Agent Josh Lahr, out of Carroll, IA. The dog has not been delivered yet. Josh will go to Kansas City for 6 weeks for training when the dog is delivered.

No new hires or retirements until next year.

Fire Service Training Bureau Update (Bureau Chief Jess Dunn):

Jess Dunn – The Accounting Technician 3 position was re-posted on February 21, 2025 and closed on March 6, 2025. Jess will be scheduling interviews for the following week.

Acadis Update – The bureau received a \$315,000 AFG award for the new LMS/RMS. We are still working through this process with the Department of Management – Division of Information Technology (DOM-DoIT). Jess has a meeting with Dom-DoIT on March 12th and hopes that the contract will be signed after this meeting. The new software will be a tremendous asset to the bureau and fire departments around the state of Iowa.

The training tower is about 95% complete. The bureau has been waiting on several punch list items to be fulfilled for the past two months. Jess expects those items to be completed in the next couple of weeks. Final walkthrough should take place in the first part of April (*update – delayed till late May*). There will be an opening ceremony upon completion.

Special Programs – The 100th Annual State Fire School took place at the end of January. The State Fire School went great, and the bureau received a lot of positive feedback. There were around 394 attendees this year.

Special programs has continued to deliver a lot of special program classes such as, Fire Officer I & II, Instructor I & II, and Inspector classes. The bureau has been receiving a lot more interest in the advanced level classes. Advanced level classes are funded by a \$20,000 grant from the National Fire Academy (NFA). The bureau puts on a two-week Investigator class each year that is also funded by the NFA grant. Unfortunately, with the funding being from the federal government, a lot of these programs have been put on hold. We are hopeful that we can continue to use the money that has already been earmarked but future distributions of grant money could impact our advanced level classes. The Investigator class is still a go for this year. Moving forward, our advanced level classes could be impacted, the bureau would have no way to fund these classes. The remaining NFA classes that are already on the schedule will either be canceled or potentially moved to an online format. More to be determined once guidance is received from the NFA/federal government.

Field Programs – Field programs has been very busy with delivering programs and scheduling props. We are currently scheduling out to the end of the year. The driving simulators have been highly requested and are being used across the state. This is the first time driving simulators have been manufactured on a mobile prop. Unfortunately, we have had to take the driving simulators out of service several times to make repairs as the manufacture continues to work out the bugs. The manufacture has been great about making necessary repairs.

The decision will be made to continue with IFTSA Essentials 8 or switch to Jones & Bartlett in May. The bureau has received several questions from community colleges regarding the curriculum change. We have informed them that we plan on deciding which route we will go with the curriculum in May. More information to come.

Certification/Accreditation – As of the beginning of this year, passing rates have been up on Fire Fighter I and HazMat Awareness. However, more students are now failing HazMat Operations than passing. Initially, more students were failing HazMat Awareness than passing. The curriculum and the test banks have not changed for the past couple of years for HazMat Awareness and Operations. Passing rates for other classes are doing well. More to be determined.

No further questions.

Osha Update:

a. IOSHA update on activity with fire departments

There has been activity with one fire department. Two incidents took place within the same fire department. Each incident took place roughly six weeks apart and both resulted in significant injuries. The inspector was able to link both incidents back to ineffective incident command. Fire fighters fighting the fire within the building did not have clear communication with whoever was in command at the site. This resulted in actions being taken that may not have been if there had been clear communication established. Post

incident analysis was untimely and light on content. The inspector learned that post incident analysis was not done after the first incident. Had post incident analysis been done after the first incident and they had learned that incident command was lacking, the second incident could have potentially been avoided. The department was cited under general duties for inadequate incident command and for the nonexistence of processes for post incident analysis. If there are further questions or more information is needed, the inspector that issued the citations has offered to provide more in-depth information.

b. Federal OSHA proposed standard

Adam is confident that there will be no new regulations forthcoming any time soon. As far as the emergency response, a press conference was held where they stated that they did not realize that what was proposed would have such a big impact. During the commenting period, it was decided that this would be reevaluated now that more information had been received. Adam does not expect to see any movement on that currently.

At this time, the OSHA heat standard for employees will not be moving forward at the federal level. The proposal at the state level did not make it through the funnel last week. We should not expect to see anything at this time, but this could change at any time.

No further questions.

Old Business:

(None)

New Business:

The Fire Marshal's Office and the FSTB will not receive a budget increase in FY 26.

No other new business.

Community College Update:

Kim Fensterman was unable to attend today's meeting. Jess answered questions internally about the curriculum update.

Public Comments:

None received.

Consideration for Revolving Loan Application:

Currently, the maximum loan amount for the revolving loan program is \$150,000. Jess and Dan hope to increase the amount that departments can apply for in the future. With delivery time for a new apparatus taking anywhere from 2-3 years, several loans are being approved in advance. Once the apparatus is complete the loan will be issued.

Maquoketa has applied for \$150,000 revolving loan for a new apparatus. Their application was complete, and they are current on their NFIRS reporting. No further discussion.

Motion

Jamie Lee motioned to approve the revolving loan application for Maquoketa, seconded by Pam Kenkel. Approved 5-0.

Action Items:

No action items. The next meeting will tentatively be on Tuesday, June 10, 2025, at 10:00 am if a meeting is even needed. *(NOTE – 2 members have a conflict with this date so if we need a meeting it will need to be pushed)*

Adjournment:***Motion***

Ellen Hagen motioned to adjourn the meeting at 10:26 am. Seconded by Lonni Koch. Passed 5-0.